

The Massey Harris 22 Carb Caper

~ *Paul Moroni*

You know it's going to be a fun day when the phone rings and it's your buddy, Gordon, up to his elbows in his Massey Harris 22 and clearly out of patience. He tells me his tractor's been running for exactly two minutes at a time, just long enough to give him hope before stalling out again. Classic heartbreak.

Of course, the timing couldn't have been worse—he wanted to drive it in the Foxboro Founders Day parade and decided the night before was the perfect time to ask if he could borrow my spare carb. (You can probably see where this is going.)

I told him to bring his carb over and we'd take a look. Sure enough, when we pulled it apart, everything *looked* clean. But when we checked the little brass screw next to the bowl drain, we spotted the culprit: a tiny speck of dirt floating up just enough to block the fuel passage. That was all it took to make the tractor cough and quit.

We bolted my carb on his MH 22, and it ran fine, so he loaded it up and got ready for the parade.

Parade day came, and I met up with Brad to make the 4-mile drive to the starting point. Between us we had a good showing—Brad with his IH 130 and JD 40, me with my MH Mustang. We joined up with about a dozen folks from the New England Antique Truck and Tractor Club. But... no Gordon.

Turns out he sprung a gas leak right when he arrived and had to haul his tractor home. Later, he shows up—carb in hand—and says he's got bigger problems.

When he installed the carb, he'd used Teflon tape on the brass fuel line fitting. Bad idea. That stuff makes it way too easy to overtighten, and since pipe threads are tapered, he ended up splitting the cast housing. Ouch. Moral of the story be careful with Teflon tape on carbs.

While some of the guys were ready to write it off as junk, I brought it back to the bench to see what I could do. Three cracks around the threaded hole, chunks missing—didn't look good. I cleaned it up, ground down the area, used a brass rod for alignment, and welded the cast back together. Cast can be tricky—lots of porosity—but after some grinding, rewelding, drilling, and rethreading, the carb was back in shape. Not perfect but not junk either.